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ABSTRACT

The report provides a survey of staff development (SD) managers in 505 English, Welsh, and Scottish further education colleges (227 responses). The objective was to determine how much SD has changed and matured since incorporation, and how much it has created benchmarks. Findings indicated that few staff developers had a relevant SD qualification. SD tended to be linked to one of three college functions: curriculum, quality, or personnel. Budget size varied widely; the median figure of 1% of the college budget was relatively stable across all types of colleges. The current trend for SD budgets was downward, reflecting financial difficulties in the sector as a whole. Five main models were identified: personnel unit, curriculum or professional development unit, SD committee, decentered model, and lone operator. In two-thirds of colleges, staff developers were lone operators. In terms of time commitment, SD had a relatively high priority. Six in 10 colleges had a contractual requirement to take part in SD; over 40% of these did not specify how and when it should be discharged. SD priorities for teaching staff were as follows: improve teaching, curriculum design and strategy, teaching quality maintenance, self-assessment, teaching qualifications, and management development. The increasing sophistication of planning processes was not matched by processes for review and evaluation. Few mechanisms were in place to evaluate changes in performance or achievement of business outcomes. Most colleges offered in-house SD programs; 9 of 10 waived fees for full-time staff. (Contains 23 references.) (YLB)

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Staff development in transition: benchmarks for further education

Paul Martinez

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Foreword

Staff development has come to the top of political and educational agendas in the last six months. The Minister has made it clear through the FE Standards Fund that he expects to see a substantial improvement in retention and achievement over the next three years and staff development will be needed to support a new focus on raising standards and student success. Staff development will be boosted by two direct sources of new funding via FEFC:

- earmarked funding for additional and highly focused continuing professional development
- financial support for Beacon colleges to disseminate their work more widely and financial support for less successful colleges to improve their performance.

In addition, colleges will benefit from the *Raising quality and achievement* programme developed by FEDA with the Association of Colleges.

Staff development will undoubtedly feature largely in action plans for improvement developed by colleges and supported by other strands of the Standards Fund.

In this context, the present report is particularly timely. It provides some hard information about staff development and staff developers. It investigates staff development budgets, priorities and links to college strategy. It provides benchmarks for the way that staff development operates within the college; its structures, mechanisms for planning and evaluation and links to other key college functions. Finally, it seeks to answer the question 'Where is staff development going and how far has it travelled?'

Chris Hughes
Chief Executive, FEDA

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Key messages

To staff developers

- Many staff developers will need support and development themselves if they are to be effective. Half of all staff developers have been in post for less than two years; just under a quarter have been in post for less than one year.
- Many more staff developers need to achieve a relevant staff development qualification.
- Staff development budgets should be constructed using a standard list of items.
- One college in two will need to develop procedures and systems to evaluate the contribution of staff development to improvements in performance and the achievement of college business objectives.
- Staff developers should ensure that any arrangements for the devolution of staff development budgets match arrangements to share responsibilities for planning and evaluating staff development.
- Where budgets are devolved, the staff development accountabilities of budget holders should be clarified and reinforced if necessary.
- Colleges should explore opportunities to create frameworks for the accreditation of staff development.

To college principalships

- Staff developers need to be a member of, or report to a member of, their college senior management team.
- The teaching loads of staff developers should be reviewed. Heavy teaching requirements may not be compatible with the delivery of an increasingly strategic role.
- The relationship between staff development and other college functions needs to be more clearly articulated.
- Staff development budgets should be reviewed to ensure their adequacy. Particular attention needs to be paid to staff development budgets which represent less than 1% of overall college expenditure.
- Staff development structures, and in particular the position of lone staff developers, need to be reviewed to ensure that the structure is compatible with staff development priorities, strategies and systems.
- There is a strong case for establishing a closer organisational link between a college's teacher trainers and staff developers.
- Colleges need to match or exceed sector norms for the allocation of in-house staff development days (four to five days for teaching staff; three to four days for business support staff).
- The contractual position of staff in relation to continuing professional development (CPD) needs to be reviewed to ensure that it is consistent with college priorities and other staff development policies.

To national agencies

- The Department for Education and Employment (DfEE) will need to take account of the current availability of in-house opportunities for teacher training in any consideration of the introduction of compulsory qualified teacher status for further education.
- In the event of the introduction of qualified teacher status, some sort of interim arrangements will be required to ensure that colleges that do not offer in-house teacher training are not placed at a substantial disadvantage.

Recommendations concerning staff development for teachers and curriculum heads are developed in a forthcoming, parallel FEDA publication: *Learning from continuing professional development*.

1 Introduction

Background

Since incorporation, staff development and staff developers have been subject to enormous changes.

Under local authorities, staff development was largely:

- associated with the administration of national grants distributed through LEAs
- tied to the priorities and preoccupations of LEAs
- focused on teachers
- reactive.

Since incorporation, staff developers have had to identify their own priorities, negotiate funding as part of their college planning and design, deliver and evaluate their own college staff development programmes.

The main drivers of staff development in this period have included:

- the need to put in place staff development policies, plans and systems
- a desire to link staff development more closely to college strategies and objectives
- a widespread commitment to the achievement of Investors in People standards
- the extension of staff development opportunities to business support staff within colleges
- coping with the staff development implications of a period of very rapid change affecting almost all college staff.

More recently still, staff development has been linked to a variety of national and college strategies to improve teaching and learning:

- the widespread extension of teacher observation schemes
- the launch of National Standards for teachers in further education
- the rapid extension of information and learning technology
- the FEFC-sponsored Inclusive Learning initiative
- a number of FEDA projects to improve teaching and learning.

The research on which this report was based was undertaken to find out how much staff development has changed and matured since incorporation and creates some benchmarks for staff development.

The research has been designed to complement the recent FEFC survey: *Professional development in further education: national survey report 1997–98*. Specifically the present report is based on responses from almost half of all college staff developers in Great Britain and interprets and analyses a substantial volume of hard data supplied by staff developers.

Objectives

This report is based on a survey undertaken in the spring term of 1998. Its purpose is threefold:

- to identify patterns of staff development organisation and activity in further education sector colleges in the UK
- to provide benchmarking information to staff development practitioners both across the sector and by type of college
- to provide background information for a second report: *Learning from continuing professional development*.

Methodology

A questionnaire was sent to the staff development manager in all English, Welsh and Scottish colleges. There was no follow-up.

The questionnaire had already been piloted with 17 sixth-form colleges in the Midlands and their responses to the earlier form of this questionnaire are included in this analysis.

Where relevant, comparisons have been made with two earlier surveys of (primarily) English further education and tertiary colleges, completed in 1993 and published as *Staff development in the FE sector* (Martinez, 1994) and a survey of Scottish, Welsh, sixth-form, land-based and art and design colleges done in 1994 and reported as *Staff development and training* (Martinez, 1995).

The survey outcomes are presented in two ways. Because of the size and representative nature of the sample it has been possible to make some generalisations concerning norms for the sector. The data has also been analysed by type of college using six categories:

- (English) FE colleges
- Scottish colleges
- Welsh colleges
- (English) sixth-form colleges
- land-based industry colleges
- art and design colleges.

In this discussion, English FE and tertiary colleges are treated as a single category.

In the presentation of statistical data, all numbers have been rounded to the nearest whole number.

Survey responses

In all, 227 colleges replied. Figure 1 shows the number of responses by category of college, the number of colleges in each category and the response rate expressed in percentages.

Figure 1 Number and percentage response from different categories of college

Type of college	No. of colleges	No. of responses	%
English FE and tertiary	286	133	47
Scottish	45	14	31
Welsh	29	7	24
Sixth-form college	107	53	50
Land-based industry	30	15	50
Art and design	8	5	62
Total	**505**	**227**	**45**

The response rate is good for a survey of this type (i.e. without follow-up), although the relatively few responses from Welsh colleges mean that generalisations about Wales will require some caution.

Definitions

The terms staff, continuing, in-service and professional development are treated interchangeably unless otherwise indicated. They cover a spectrum of activity from formal, accredited learning programmes to informal, personal and collaborative learning.

Similarly, the terms education, training and INSET (in-service education and training) are treated as equivalents. They refer to organised learning programmes and are thus particular instances of development.

2 Information about staff developers

Job title

As noted in the earlier surveys (Martinez, 1994, 1995), job titles for the staff development role are extremely diverse, reflecting the local context, history, role and structure. The only patterns which emerge with any consistency reflect the internal priorities in colleges and in the staff development role.

Thus, job titles tend to highlight the primary focus of staff development in a college. Four broad categories can be identified: curriculum, quality, personnel and stand alone/cross college.

A range of job titles selected more or less at random can be sorted according to these broad categories:

Curriculum:

- Staff and Curriculum Development Coordinator
- Director of Academic Services
- Director of Learning Services
- Assistant Principal, Curriculum and Staff Development
- Staff Tutor
- Professional Development Manager
- Assistant Academic Director

Quality:

- Director of Enterprise and Quality
- Director of Quality
- Quality Manager
- Head of Staff Development and Quality Assurance
- Customer Service/Quality Assurance Manager
- Director of Quality and Planning
- Senior Tutor (Quality and Staff Development)

Personnel:

- Director of Finance and Personnel
- Training and Personnel Officer
- Personnel and Administration Manager
- Head of Human Resources
- Human Resource Development Manager

Stand alone/cross college:

- Staff Development Manager
- Staff Development Officer
- Staff Development Coordinator

Length of time in post

There is a wide range of experience. Almost a quarter of staff developers (23%) have been in post for less than a year. A slightly larger proportion have been in post for one-to-two years (27%), with similar percentages for three-to-five years (23%) and over five years (26%).

Sixth-form colleges and colleges of art and design had slightly more staff developers in post for two years or less. English land-based industry and Scottish colleges have proportionally more experienced staff developers (in post for five years or more). The data is set out in Figure 2 opposite.

Four inferences can be drawn from this data:

- The experience of staff developers is very diverse: just over a quarter have been in post for five or more years; just under a quarter have been in post for less than a year.
- There has been considerable upheaval in the staff development function which no doubt reflects the rate of change in the sector and the large volume of restructuring activity.
- The greatest change seems to have occurred in sixth-form colleges and colleges of art and design. This may indicate the relative novelty of staff development as a specialist function in these colleges.
- The greatest stability within the sector for the staff development role can be found in English FE, land-based industry and Scottish colleges.

Relative seniority of staff developers

Forty per cent of staff developers are members of their college senior management team. Membership of the senior management team appears to correlate strongly (and inversely) to the size of college. (See Figure 3.) Thus, the smallest colleges (sixth-form colleges, land-based industry, and art and design colleges) have the largest proportion of staff developers who are members of the college SMT (74%, 73% and 60% respectively). Conversely, the largest colleges (notably English and Scottish FE colleges) have the lowest

Figure 2 Length of time in post

Type of college	Less than 1 year		1–2 years		3–5 years		More than 5 years		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
FE	31	23	26	19	38	29	36	27	131	100
Scottish	2	14	5	36	1	7	6	43	14	100
Welsh	2	29	—	—	4	57	1	14	7	100
Sixth-form college	13	25	15	28	16	30	9	17	53	100
Land-based industry	4	27	3	20	2	13	6	40	15	100
Art and design	—	—	4	80	1	20	—	—	5	100
Total (average)	**52**	**(23)**	**53**	**(23)**	**62**	**(27)**	**58**	**(26)**	**225**	**(100)**

degree of SMT membership (22% and 29% respectively). The number of Welsh responses is too low to permit any secure generalisation.

Across all colleges, 94% (128) of staff developers who are not themselves a member of the SMT, report to someone who is. This leaves a small and anomalous group of nine staff developers who are neither members of, nor report to a member of, the SMT.

Four inferences can be drawn from this discussion:

- Staff development is a relatively important function. In smaller colleges, responsibility is usually held by a member of SMT. In larger colleges, staff developers more often report to a member of their college SMT.
- The position of staff developers who are neither members of, nor report to a member of, their college SMT, is clearly anomalous.
- Problems can occur in large colleges if staff development is not effectively integrated within strategic management.
- The opposite problem can occur in smaller colleges where the diversity of roles of the SMT member responsible for staff development can undermine the effectiveness of the role in operational terms.

Salary of staff developers

There are substantial differences in salary levels between staff developers. Around 6 out of 10 staff developers (62%) are paid less than £25k; 21% are paid between £25k and £35k; and 17% are paid over £35k. (See Figure 4 overleaf.)

Sixth-form colleges differ quite markedly from other colleges in that almost half (49%) the staff developers

Figure 3 Seniority of staff developers: membership of SMT

Type of college	Member of SMT	
	No.	%
FE	29	22
Scottish	4	29
Welsh	4	57
Sixth-form college	39	74
Land-based industry	11	73
Art and design	3	60
Total	**90**	**40**

are paid £25k or more. This compares with an average of 30% of staff developers in other types of college.

This does not mean that staff developers in sixth-form colleges are overpaid! It seems rather to relate to the particularly high instance of SMT membership among staff developers in sixth-form colleges. Indeed, the majority of respondents from sixth-form colleges describe themselves as deputy or vice principal, assistant principal or director, and deliver their staff development role in conjunction with a number of other responsibilities. Only a third of respondents in sixth-form colleges seem to be focused mainly on their staff development role and describe themselves as staff development manager, coordinator or tutor.

Thus, in terms of salary, staff developers seem to be split broadly into two groups: those whose job is defined primarily in operational terms and whose salary broadly equates with teacher salaries and those whose role is associated with management status and who are paid more than £25k.

Figure 4 Salary levels of staff developers

Type of college	Less than £15k		£15k to £24,999		£25k to £35k		More than £35k		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
FE	2	1	84	64	29	22	16	12	131	100
Scottish	—	—	9	64	4	29	1	7	14	100
Welsh	—	—	4	57	—	—	3	43	7	100
Sixth-form college	—	—	27	51	11	21	15	28	53	100
Land-based industry	—	—	9	60	2	13	4	27	15	100
Art and design	—	—	4	8	1	20	—	—	5	100
Total	**2**	**1**	**137**	**61**	**47**	**21**	**39**	**17**	**225**	**100**

Teaching responsibilities of staff developers

There is considerable divergence among colleges when it comes to the teaching duties of staff developers. In just under half of all colleges, staff developers have no teaching responsibilities or teach for two hours or less per week (46%). At the other extreme, over one-fifth (22%) of staff developers teach for between 6 and 10 hours per week and a similar proportion (23%) teach for 10 or more hours per week (see Figure 5 opposite).

A relatively high proportion of staff developers in sixth-form colleges (48%) teach for 10 hours or more per week. This does not appear to be a function of the size of the college. The teaching duties of staff developers in land-based industry, and art and design colleges are far more similar to the norms for all colleges.

Interestingly, the least experienced staff developers tend to do the most teaching. Over 80% of staff developers who have been in post for two years or less, have six or more hours of teaching per week. This approaches 90% for staff developers in post for less than a year.

The data suggests four inferences:

- Many staff developers have substantial teaching commitments. Staff developers in sixth-form colleges have substantial teaching loads compared with FE colleges and, indeed, compared with other small colleges.
- It seems both inequitable and – in relation to the role – impractical for so many of the least experienced staff developers to have the largest teaching commitments.
- If the strategic and operational responsibilities for staff development are not carefully aligned and shared with other managers, the staff development function is unlikely to be effective.
- At the risk of stating the obvious, colleges need to strike a balance between teaching commitments and the increasingly strategic responsibilities of the staff developer.

Qualifications of staff developers

Around a third of staff developers (30%) in English colleges have (or are working towards) a staff development or human resource (HR) development qualification. The situation is rather different, however, in Scottish and Welsh colleges. If we combine their responses (because of small numbers), 57% of staff developers in these colleges have a relevant professional qualification.

Further education colleges are slightly above the norm. Sixth-form colleges, on the other hand, are significantly below the norm for the sector with only some 4% of staff developers possessing a relevant qualification. (See Figure 6 opposite.)

Qualified respondents were asked to state their qualification. Several had two or more qualifications. The qualifications fall into three broad groups. The most frequently mentioned qualification was an IPM/IPD certificate, diploma or other qualification, usually associated with current membership of the Institute of Personnel and Development (49 mentions). The second largest category was management qualifications including MBAs, MScs in management, management NVQs, etc. (23 mentions). The third largest group comprised MAs or MEds in education, with management components (17 mentions).

Figure 5 Teaching responsibilities of staff developers

Type of college	Number of hours teaching: Nil No.	Nil %	2 hours or less No.	2 hours or less %	3–5 hours No.	3–5 hours %	6–10 hours No.	6–10 hours %	More than 10 hours No.	More than 10 hours %	Total No.	Total %
Further education	66	44	13	9	8	5	34	23	29	19	150	100
Scottish	8	61	—	—	4	29	2	14	—	—	14	100
Welsh	3	43	—	—	—	—	3	43	1	14	7	100
Sixth-form college	6	11	2	4	10	19	10	19	26	48	54	100
Land-based industry	6	33	3	17	1	6	4	22	4	22	18	100
Art and design	3	60	—	—	—	—	1	20	1	20	5	100
Total (average)	**92**	**(39)**	**17**	**(7)**	**19**	**(8)**	**51**	**(22)**	**54**	**(23)**	**233**	**(100)**

Note: A few staff developers with no teaching duties are included in the two hours or less figures.

QUALIFICATIONS: SOME CONCLUSIONS

- Relatively few staff developers have a relevant staff development qualification.
- There seems to be no obvious reason why staff developers in English further education colleges should be relatively less qualified than their colleagues in Scotland and Wales.
- The lack of qualified status among staff developers in sixth-form colleges is striking; it suggests that staff development is seen as a relatively small part of the responsibilities of the postholder.
- The fact that a significant minority of staff developers in the small specialist colleges do possess a professional qualification suggests that there is substantial scope to increase the proportion of qualified staff developers in sixth-form colleges.
- Qualifications which are relevant to the staff development role fall into three broad categories: qualifications awarded by the Institute of Personnel and Development, general management and related human resource management qualifications, and MAs and MEds in education management.

Figure 6 Qualifications of staff developers

Type of college	Qualifications held: Yes No.	Yes %	No No.	No %	Missing No.	Missing %	Total No.	Total %
FE	48	36	81	61	4	3	133	100
Scottish	8	57	6	43	—	—	14	100
Welsh	4	57	3	43	—	—	7	100
Sixth-form college	2	4	33	62	18	34	53	100
Land-based industry	5	33	10	67	—	—	15	100
Art and design	2	40	2	40	1	20	5	100
Total	**69**	**30**	**135**	**59**	**23**	**10**	**227**	**100**

Notes: Many of the sixth-form college cases are missing because of an error in the pilot version of the questionnaire.
Qualifications include both those achieved and those in progress.

3 Staff development strategy and priorities

Rivers of ink have run in the attempt to answer the question 'what is strategy?' or indeed 'what is staff development strategy?'. The approach here is entirely pragmatic. Based on assumptions derived from reading the staff development literature (Darling, 1990; CBI, 1991; Parker, 1994; Peters, 1992; Marchington, 1992; Knight, 1994; Garavan, 1991; Bevan and Hayday, 1994; Webb, 1996) and leavened by common sense, there appear to be five key dimensions to staff development strategy:

- the relative priority assigned to staff development as a college function
- declared priorities for staff development and their link to college strategy
- the way in which core staff development processes are organised
- the volume and content of staff development activity
- planning and evaluating staff development.

For ease of reference, the planning and evaluation of staff development are discussed in the next chapter.

Links with other college functions

Across all colleges, staff development was most frequently linked to the curriculum (26%), quality (22%) and personnel (26%). Significant variations from this norm occurred in Welsh, land-based industry and sixth-form colleges where links to the curriculum function were identified particularly strongly. Scottish, Welsh and land-based industry colleges identified staff development strongly with quality. English and Scottish FE colleges reported particularly strong links with personnel. Full details are set out in Figure 7.

Thus, two of the largest groups of colleges differed strongly from each other. English further education colleges identify staff development strongly with personnel and weakly with curriculum. In sixth-form colleges, the strength of these linkages was reversed.

Figure 7 may, however, be somewhat misleading. Almost a quarter of staff developers indicated that their role was linked to two or more key functions or indeed that it was linked to all major cross college functions. This undoubtedly explains why a relatively large number of respondents felt unable to answer the question (as phrased), or volunteered a clarification or qualification of their answer. Typical comments are shown below.

> *Staff development is linked strongly with quality and personnel, particularly through appraisal, induction and management training.*
>
> *I share clerical support with the personnel department: other than this, I have close links with all areas.*
>
> *Very hard to answer. I am personally linked most closely to quality but we do more curriculum led staff development than quality led.*
>
> *Much effort is spent linking staff development to curriculum, quality and personnel.*

Figure 7 Closest links between staff development and core functions

Type of college	Curriculum		Quality		Personnel		Principalship		Other		Missing		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
FE	24	18	29	22	44	33	4	3	8	6	24	18	133	100
Scottish	1	7	5	36	5	36	2	14	1	7	–	–	14	100
Welsh	3	43	2	29	1	14	–	–	–	–	1	14	7	100
Sixth-form college	24	45	8	15	6	11	5	9	7	13	3	6	53	100
Land-based industry	6	40	6	40	1	7	–	–	–	–	2	13	15	100
Art and design	1	20	1	20	3	60	–	–	–	–	–	–	5	100
Total	**59**	**26**	**51**	**22**	**60**	**26**	**11**	**5**	**16**	**7**	**30**	**13**	**227**	**100**

Figure 8 Staff development budgets

Type of college	Up to £6k		Up to £10k		Up to £20k		Up to £40k		Up to £70k		Up to £100k		Over £100k		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
FE	1	1	1	1	10	8	26	20	48	36	19	14	27	20	132	100
Scottish	—	—	—	—	2	14	3	21	4	29	3	21	2	14	14	100
Welsh	—	—	—	—	1	14	1	14	4	57	1	14	—	—	7	100
Sixth-form college	1	2	7	14	18	35	21	41	4	8	—	—	—	—	51	100
Land-based industry	1	7	1	7	4	27	5	33	4	27	—	—	—	—	15	100
Art and design	—	—	—	—	1	20	2	40	2	40	—	—	—	—	5	100
Total	**3**	**1**	**9**	**4**	**36**	**16**	**58**	**26**	**66**	**29**	**23**	**10**	**29**	**13**	**224**	**100**

Three inferences can be drawn from this discussion:

- Staff development tends to be linked to one of three significant college functions: curriculum, quality or personnel.
- In a number of colleges, however, staff development is said to be linked to two or more key functions or indeed to all major functions.
- There are significant differences in emphasis between different types of college.

Staff development budgets

Previous survey work on staff development budgets has demonstrated that they manage to be important, contentious and obscure, all at the same time. They are clearly important, in that the size of the budget can represent the 'acid test' of the relative priority assigned to staff development in college strategies (and provide the yardstick for making comparisons between colleges). They are contentious in that colleges vary considerably in what they include or exclude from their staff development budgets. They are obscure, finally, in that the basis for calculation may change from year to year.

To shed some light on this, colleges were asked to supply quite detailed pieces of information:

- the headline staff development budget figure
- the staff development budget as a percentage of the overall college budget
- details of what was included in the staff development budget
- trend information (changes from the previous year)
- the extent to which the staff development budget is devolved.

The figures for the headline budget are given above in Figure 8.

As might be expected, the larger budgets are deployed primarily in the larger FE colleges. The smaller sixth-form and specialist colleges have smaller budgets.

A different perspective on budgets can be gleaned from estimates of the size of the staff development budget as a percentage of the overall college budget. This question evidently proved more difficult to answer than any of the other questions in the survey. Thirty-seven colleges (18% of respondents) were unable to give a figure.

Of those who responded to this question, the range was considerable, extending from nil (i.e. 0%) to 16%!

For benchmarking purposes the median and interquartile range (second and third quartile i.e. the middle 50% of colleges) are presented in Figure 9 for each category of college.

Figure 9 Staff development budget as a percentage of overall college budget

Type of college	Median	Interquartile range
FE	1.0	0.7–1.0
Scottish	1.0	0.7–1.0
Welsh	n/a	n/a
Sixth-form college	1.0	0.7–1.0
Land-based industry	1.0	n/a
Art and design	1.0	n/a
Total	**1.0**	**0.7–1.0**

Figure 10 Items included in staff development budgets by college type (%)

Budget items	Type of college						
	FE	Scottish	Welsh	Sixth-form college	Land-based industry	Art and design	All
External course/ conference fees	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Travel/ accommodation expenses	92	86	86	100	100	100	91
In-house training costs	88	64	100	81	73	100	85
Equipment and materials	80	79	57	66	40	80	73
College course fees	65	86	86	60	67	80	66
Cover costs	64	29	71	26	47	100	53
Payments for part-time staff	58	43	71	38	60	100	54
All/part staff development salaries	47	43	57	21	33	20	40
In-house accommodation	40	36	14	23	40	20	35
Fixed overheads	33	43	57	34	27	20	34
Bursaries	23	–	43	11	13	–	19

The most striking thing about this data is its consistency across college types and, by extension, across college size. The middle 50% of colleges reported that between 0.7% and 1.0% of their budgets was devoted to staff development. The median figure for all types of colleges was 1.0%. This is rather higher than expected. Until now, it has been widely believed that the staff development budget was around 1.0% of the budget for staffing only (see FEFC, 1997b). Since staffing typically accounts for some 70% of college costs, the figure identified here is some 30% more.

On the other hand, there is a strong argument that the proportion of college budgets devoted to staff development is still too low. Evidence from a survey of continuing professional development (Martinez, forthcoming), demonstrates that teachers are running very hard to stand still. The pressure on colleges to raise student achievement implies additional staff development effort and, correspondingly, more resources.

Components of staff development budgets

One of the problems bedevilling previous work in this area is the lack of consistency in what is included in staff development budgets but a consensus is now emerging. These items are, in descending order of priority:

- external course/conference fees
- travel expenses
- in-house training costs and expenses
- equipment and materials
- fees for college courses
- cover costs
- payments for part-time staff
- all or part of salaries associated with staff development
- in-house accommodation (marginal costs)
- office accommodation and other fixed costs.

The full data are given in Figure 10 above.

External course/conference fees are almost universally included in staff development budgets along with travel and, where relevant, accommodation costs. In-house training and equipment costs are included by almost all colleges that provide internal staff development programmes. Exactly two-thirds of colleges also pay (or remit) fees for college courses.

There are some striking anomalies, however, with other budget items. Further education, Welsh, land-based industry, and art and design colleges are far more likely, and sixth-form and Scottish colleges far less likely, to include cover costs and payments for part-time staff.

All or part of the salaries attributable to staff development, are included less frequently in budgets, particularly by the smaller colleges. Only around a third of colleges include the (marginal) accommodation costs of running events internally and the share attributable to staff development of office and other fixed overheads. Bursaries, finally, are included by less than one-fifth of colleges. This is presumably a reflection of the relatively small number of colleges that can afford bursaries rather than their accounting practices.

There is a trend towards including more items in staff development budgets. In the 1994 survey, the percentage of colleges including cover, salary and fixed overhead costs was lower than in 1998 (Martinez, 1995). Where direct comparisons can be made, the proportion of colleges including other items was broadly the same. (See Figure 11.)

Figure 11 Trend data – items included in budgets (%)

Budget items	1994	1998
Cover costs	46	53
Salary costs	22	40
Office and other fixed overheads	29	34

Colleges were also given the opportunity to identify 'other' items of expenditure not included in the list given above. The most frequently mentioned items were subsistence and accommodation (for external courses), exam/registration fees and the costs of external consultants and trainers. All such items, however, were identified by less than 5% of colleges.

Staff development budgets: conclusions

- There is wide variation in the size of staff development budgets, with larger budgets deployed by larger colleges. The range of expenditure extends from less than £6k to over £100k.
- The range seems less extreme, however, when staff development budgets are compared with overall college budgets. The overall median for staff development budgets is 1.0% of the overall college budget. This is 30% more than FEFC estimates.
- This median figure is relatively stable across all types of college.
- The interquartile range for staff development as a proportion of the overall budget is relatively constant across all types of college at 0.7% to 1.0%.
- Given the pressure to raise levels of student achievement, there is a strong argument that the proportion of college budgets spent on staff development is still too low.
- There is a growing consensus around what should be included in staff development budgets.
- To represent the true costs of staff development, accounting procedures need to be standardised to include all the most frequent items noted above.
- Standardised accounting procedures will almost certainly raise the sector median (and interquartile range) for the staff development budget as a proportion of the overall college budget.
- Colleges should review the proportion of their college budget devoted to staff development. Budgets (using the standardised procedures) which are less than 1.0% of the overall college budget will need to be increased.

Trends in staff development budgets

Staff developers were invited to say how their budget compared to that of the previous year. Figure 12, overleaf, shows that over a third (35%) were reporting a decrease; around a fifth had had an increase (19%) and the remainder reported the same levels of budget.

This is in marked contrast to earlier surveys. In 1994, in a survey of 98 specialist, sixth-form, Scottish and Welsh colleges, 44% of all colleges (and 30% of sixth-form colleges) reported an increase over the previous year and only 13% overall and 18% of sixth-form colleges reported a decrease (Martinez, 1995). In the 1993 survey of predominantly English further education and tertiary colleges, 38% of respondents were anticipating an increase and 23% a decrease (Martinez, 1994).

If the earlier trend of an increase in the size of the staff development budget has been reversed, there is some convergence towards the norm for the budget as a percentage of the overall college budget. The data is persuasive rather than conclusive but in the 1994 survey, 14% of colleges were spending less than 0.5% of their college budget on staff development. By 1998, this had decreased to 6% of colleges. At the opposite end of the spectrum, in 1994, 24% of colleges were devoting 2% or more of their college budgets to staff development. In 1998, this had fallen back to 20% of colleges.

Figure 12 Staff development budget: comparison with previous year (%)

Type of college	Increase	Same	Decrease	Comparison not meaningful
FE	14	45	34	7
Scottish	36	21	36	7
Welsh	14	14	71	–
Sixth-form college	28	32	38	–
Land-based industry	20	53	27	–
Art and design	20	60	20	–
Total	**19**	**41**	**35**	**5**

Budget trends: conclusions

- Although there are notable exceptions, the current trend for staff development budgets is downwards.
- This trend is apparent across most types of college, doubtless reflecting the financial difficulties of the sector as a whole.
- The decrease in 1997–98 compared with the previous year may be worse than it looks at first sight because of the trend to record more items (notably salaries and overheads) in the staff development budget.
- There is a contradiction between the reported decline of staff development budgets and the college improvement agenda being addressed by staff developers.
- Over the last four years there has been some convergence of staff development budgets as a percentage of overall college budgets around a median of 1.0%.

Staff development function models

Staff development remains a fairly solitary role in colleges. Overall, 41% of staff developers said that they were working on their own. Over 50% of staff developers in sixth-form colleges said that they were working on their own and this figure rose to 60% in land-based industry colleges. The overall figure of 41% is actually an underestimate by a considerable margin of the proportion of the 'lone operators', for reasons that will become clear.

Over half (59%) of staff developers said that they worked as part of a team or unit. Five main models can be identified:

- the personnel unit
- the curriculum/professional development unit
- the staff development committee
- the decentred model
- the 'lone operator'.

The personnel unit model was the most widespread (38 cases) and occurred primarily in FE colleges. With some variations, it usually included the staff developer, plus administrative support, reporting to a strategic manager with overall responsibility for personnel and staff development. In the larger colleges, the unit also included a personnel officer or assistant.

The curriculum or professional development unit was the second most widely reported model (24 cases). The unit typically reports directly to the principal or to the senior curriculum manager in the college. Such units usually incorporated the college's teacher trainers and, less frequently, one or more specialist trainers (e.g. TDLB, IT), together with administrative support. The rationale for and composition of such a unit is discussed in Rowe (1997).

A number of colleges mentioned the existence of cross-college teams that share planning responsibilities with the staff developer and might provide support for staff development activities. In a number of colleges, there were staff development committees, usually with cross-functional representation of college staff. It was reasonably clear, however, that ultimate responsibility for staff development (in both strategic and operational dimensions) resided with the staff developer and, for this reason, the model seems actually to represent that of the lone operator.

In a couple of colleges, staff development was being led by a senior manager (a member of the principalship) with no operational support and no dedicated administrative support. Staff development responsibilities in this 'decentred' model, have been devolved to other managers. Two colleges fall into this category. In the words of one:

Staff development is managed on a functional basis by the respective manager, e.g. programme area leaders for their programme area, the director of curriculum for cross-college curriculum issues, etc.

I have called this a decentred rather than a decentralised or devolved model since the absence of any operational coordination, and the subsumption of overall responsibility in a portfolio of other roles, suggests the abolition of central coordination rather than the devolution of prescribed staff development responsibilities. I suspect that this model is more widespread than indicated by this survey. Indeed, most colleges operating such a model would find it difficult to identify someone who might respond to a survey of this nature.

Thirty colleges identified the staff development unit or team as the staff developer plus administrative support. Since it is only the support that distinguishes this 'team' from the lone operator, it seems more appropriate to classify the two groups as one.

Finally, two colleges identified staff development as taking place within quality units, but these were indistinguishable from the curriculum/professional development model except that they reported to the designated quality manager.

In the light of this discussion, a more representative picture of the size and organisation of the staff development function appears to be as follows:

Lone operators	89	43%
Lone operators with staff development committee	23	11%
Lone operator with administrative support	30	14%
Sub total: lone operators	**142**	**68%**
Personnel unit	38	18%
Curriculum/professional development unit	26	13%
Sub total: team approach	**64**	**31%**
Decentred model	2	1%
Total	**208**	**100%**

There were 19 missing cases.

This predominant pattern of organisation is problematic. At best, the lone staff developer will need professional, organisational and political skills of a very high order to deliver the role effectively. At worst, the full range of strategic and operational objectives may not be achievable by a lone staff developer.

There is a further anomaly. Over three-quarters (83%) of colleges say that they offer in-house opportunities for teachers to gain recognised teaching qualifications. And yet, in over two-thirds of colleges (68%), the staff developer is essentially a lone operator.

The true unit or team approaches tend to be associated either with personnel or with curriculum functions. Each has its strengths and weaknesses. The first tends to be more equitable. It will focus equally on all staff (managers, teachers, and support staff) but may find it difficult to focus specifically on the effective professional development of teachers. The second tends to be focused on teacher development, with the possible loss of focus for support staff.

Six inferences are suggested by this brief discussion:

- In two-thirds of colleges, staff developers are lone operators.
- The predominant team or unit approaches are associated either with personnel or curriculum functions.
- There is a surprising lack of structural linkage between teacher trainers and staff developers.
- Given the current preoccupation in the sector with curriculum, pedagogy and student achievement (see staff development priorities on page 19), there is a strong case for a closer organisational link between a college's teacher trainers and the staff developer.
- Staff developers operating on their own will generally find it difficult to fulfil all their college's expectations of the staff development role.
- The high percentage of lone operators in sixth-form colleges, together with their relative seniority (and by implication, their other responsibilities), suggests that opportunities to coordinate staff development may be quite limited.

VOLUME OF STAFF DEVELOPMENT

The sector norm is for colleges to allocate some whole college days for staff development: 84% of all colleges do this. The practice appears to be less common in Scottish and Welsh colleges (64% and 57% respectively).

Among colleges which run whole college staff development days, there is a relatively generous commitment of time. For teachers, this is the highest in land-based industry and Welsh colleges (6.40 days and 5.33 days, on average, respectively). For the largest category of colleges – further education colleges – the average number of teacher days is 4.9.

The commitment to support staff is slightly less strong, ranging from 5.1 days (land-based industry) to 2.6 days (colleges of art and design). Across all types of college, the average commitment for teachers to whole college staff development days is 4.44 days and for support staff: 3.60 days. The full data is set out in Figure 13.

Figure 13 Number of whole-college staff development days (averages)

Type of college	Teachers	Support staff
FE	4.93	3.71
Scottish	4.78	3.00
Welsh	5.33	4.00
Sixth-form college	4.30	3.22
Land-based industry	6.40	5.10
Art and design	4.00	2.60
Total	**4.44**	**3.60**

Three conclusions suggest themselves:

- In terms of the commitment of time to whole college days, staff development has a relatively high priority. The norm for the commitment of teachers to whole-college staff development days is between four and five days. The equivalent norm for support staff is between three and four days. These figures evidently exclude staff development which takes place at other times of the year.
- Colleges which do not offer whole-college staff development days will need to ensure that their staff have access to an equivalent volume of development time as part of their overall allocation of resources to staff development activity.
- Colleges where the commitment to staff development is significantly below the norm will need to increase their commitment.

STAFF DEVELOPMENT AND STAFF CONTRACTS

The contractual position of further education staff in relation to continuing professional development is, on the basis of this survey, quite variable. Six colleges in ten include an obligation to take part in staff development in their contracts of employment (60%). This proportion is highest in sixth-form colleges (70%) and lowest in Scottish and Welsh colleges (14% and 43%, respectively).

Even where there is an obligation, its nature is not always clear. Thus, of colleges that include such a requirement, 54 (41%) do not specify when or how this should take place. Only 5 colleges (4%) suggest that staff development should take place entirely outside work time, while 28 colleges (21%) specify that staff development should take place exclusively within work time. The largest group of colleges (46 colleges, 35%) suggest that staff development should take place partly in their staff's own time and partly in work time.

Figure 14 Staff development as a contractual requirement

	Contractual position									
	In own time		In work time		Mixture		Not specified		Total	
Type of college	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
FE	4	5	17	21	33	41	27	33	81	100
Scottish	–	–	–	–	–	–	2	100	2	100
Welsh	–	–	–	–	3	75	1	25	4	100
Sixth-form college	1	3	11	31	5	14	18	51	35	100
Land-based industry	–	–	–	–	5	62	3	38	8	100
Art and design	–	–	–	–	–	–	3	100	3	100
Total	**5**	**4**	**28**	**21**	**46**	**35**	**54**	**41**	**133**	**100**

The data for colleges that do include a contractual requirement to take part in continuing professional development is set out in Figure 14.

Inferences

- Given the wholesale re-creation and rewriting of staff contracts that has taken place since incorporation, it is surprising that such a large proportion of colleges (40%) do not have a contractual requirement to take part in staff development.
- It is even more surprising that over 40% of colleges including such a requirement, do not specify how and when the requirement should be discharged.
- This absence of clarity concerning contractual obligations seems to run counter to calls for greater professionalism within the further education sector.
- Colleges will need to review the contractual position of staff to ensure that this is consistent with their other staff development policies.

STAFF DEVELOPMENT PRIORITIES: TEACHERS

Staff developers were asked to identify the three main priorities for the development of teaching staff. The responses were extremely diverse but the majority can be divided into six broad categories. They are, in descending order of importance:

- improve teaching (168 mentions), comprising improving delivery (88), key skills (42) and observation/appraisal (38)
- develop curriculum design and strategy (146 mentions), including information and learning technology (110), resource-based learning, modularisation, etc. (36)
- maintain quality of teaching (94), comprising professional, curriculum and subject updating (64) and responding to national changes (30)
- self-assessment and quality assurance processes (73)
- teaching qualifications (69) including TDLB awards (38) and initial teacher training awards (31)
- management development (54).

Other priorities were mentioned far less frequently. The next most popular priority was tutoring (18 mentions), followed by Investors in People (9), customer care (6) and improving teamwork (5).

This represents a dramatic shift from the priorities identified in the 1993 survey of FE colleges (Martinez, 1994). Then, the priorities identified by the 118 colleges that took part in the survey were, again in descending order of priority:

- maintain quality of teaching (108 mentions) comprising responding to national changes, notably GNVQs (50), subject updating (35) and continuing professional development (23)
- teaching qualifications (100), including TDLB awards (71) and initial teacher training (29)
- management development (93)
- improve teaching (58) comprising observation/appraisal (51) and 'improve quality' (7)
- develop curriculum design and strategy (41) including modularisation (35) and IET (6)
- Investors in People (30)
- IT for management purposes (30).

The categories used in the two surveys are slightly different but several conclusions can be drawn:

- Priorities have changed towards what might be termed a development and improvement agenda from a mainly maintenance agenda.
- This can be seen in the current priorities of improving the quality of teaching and learning, developing curriculum design and strategy and self-assessment and quality assurance processes.
- Information and learning technology has become a major priority from a very low base in 1993.
- Teaching qualifications in the form of TDLB awards have a much lower priority now, presumably because the main phase of TDLB accreditation has been implemented.
- Similarly, Investors in People and training in IT for management purposes have sharply declined as priorities.
- Above all, the change to a development and improvement focus suggests two things: first, colleges are prioritising change and development as part of their strategic orientation and, second, staff development is being accorded a major role in implementing this strategy.

STAFF DEVELOPMENT PRIORITIES: SUPPORT STAFF

Staff development priorities for support staff are, in descending order of importance:

- IT, mainly software packages and new MIS systems (157 mentions)
- professional updating specific to the job role (109)
- customer care, including customer care NVQs (78)
- quality assurance, including self-assessment and 'preparation for inspection' and establishing service standards (57)
- health and safety, including food hygiene and first aid (54)
- supervisory and management training (44).

A number of other priorities were identified, but far less frequently. The next most frequently mentioned priorities include appraisal (18), professional qualifications other than customer care NVQs (14), flexibility and multiskilling (12) and team building (8).

The needs of support staff were not canvassed specifically in earlier surveys and trend information is not, therefore, available.

The main inferences that can be drawn are that:

- Support staff have not quite achieved equal status with teaching staff using the volume of cross-college training days as a measure (see Figure 13 on page 18).
- Attention has been given to the specific training needs of support staff.
- The development of IT competencies and skills is by some distance the most widespread priority.

4 Planning and evaluating staff development

Without a detailed interview in the course of a college visit, it is often difficult to find out exactly how staff development works in practice. In order to provide a reasonably robust analysis of who is responsible for what and how these responsibilities are discharged, staff developers were asked to provide answers to four interlinked questions:

- who plans staff development and how?
- how is staff development evaluated?
- who (in practice) has the lead responsibility for the development of identified groups of staff?
- how much (if any) of the staff development budget is devolved?

Planning staff development

Planning staff development appears to be relatively well developed. Most colleges produce plans which form part of their college strategic plan, plus operational and activity plans.

Around nine in ten colleges have strategic plans for staff development or sections in strategic plans devoted to staff development. Slightly over half (55%) of all colleges have staff development strategies created by staff developers and slightly under half (45%), are created by somebody else. Some departures from the norm are evident in land-based industry colleges which are less likely to have strategic staff development plans and sixth-form colleges where the opposite is the case.

Virtually all colleges produce operational or activity plans. In most, these are written by the staff developer. Around half of all colleges also ask their curriculum or functional managers to refer to staff development in their operational plans. Many colleges produce two sorts of operational plans: the centrally led plan driven by the staff developer and the local departmental or divisional plans. (See Figure 15.)

Comparisons with earlier surveys demonstrate that more colleges are producing staff development plans at strategic and operational levels.

The relevant data for the three surveys is set out in Figure 16 overleaf.

The questions asked in the surveys were slightly different, but the increase in the proportion of colleges reporting both strategic and operational plans is quite marked.

Figure 15 Production of staff development plans

	Type of college													
	FE		Scottish		Welsh		Sixth-form college		Land-based industry		Art and design		All	
Strategic plans	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Section of strategic plan written by someone else	59	46	3	21	3	43	17	50	1	7	2	50	85	42
Section of strategic plan written by staff developer	59	46	7	64	3	43	21	62	9	60	3	75	104	52
Operational plans														
Operational plan	98	77	6	43	4	57	22	65	13	87	3	75	146	73
Section of operational plan written by curriculum/ functional managers	61	48	5	36	5	71	20	59	7	23	2	50	100	50

Note: There are 27 missing cases, 17 of which were the sixth-form colleges involved in piloting the survey, where the question was not asked.

Figure 16 Trend data: production of staff development plans

Plan	1993[1]	1994[2]	1998
Strategic plan	65%	80%	94%[3]
Operational plan	74%	62%	123%[4]

Notes: 1. Survey of 124, predominantly FE and tertiary colleges (Martinez, 1994).
2. Survey of 98 colleges (Martinez, 1995).
3. Amalgamation of percentages of colleges where strategic plans are created by the staff developer and/or written by someone else.
4. Amalgamation of percentage of colleges where operational plans are written by the staff developer and by line managers; many colleges do both so the total comes to more than 100%.

Evaluating staff development

The increasing sophistication of planning processes may not yet be matched by processes for reviewing and evaluating. In the discussion which follows, therefore, detailed attention is paid to evaluation processes, not only for their own sake but also because of the light they shed on the effectiveness of planning mechanisms.

The issue was investigated in two ways. Staff developers were asked to indicate on a matrix what was to be evaluated and who undertook the evaluation. They were asked, secondly, what sort of evaluation mechanisms were being used for changes to performance and the achievement of business outcomes or objectives.

Figure 17 shows the response to the first question.

This response shows an almost universal practice of asking participants to give their reactions to events using a version of the traditional evaluation or response sheet (or 'happy sheets'). At first sight, it also appears to show a fairly widespread incidence of evaluations of improvements to skill, performance and the achievement of business outcomes or objectives.

An examination of the mechanisms identified by colleges for assessing changes to performance, however, reveals that evaluation is much less well developed than it might appear.

The issue goes beyond the creation of mechanisms to demonstrate value for money or secure continuous improvements. It reflects directly on the adequacy of planning mechanisms. If objectives or targets are not being adequately specified in the planning process, this will show up in the (poverty of) evaluation mechanisms. Similarly, the widespread involvement of strategic and operational managers in staff development planning will not be effective, unless they are also involved in evaluation.

Changes in performance

The question about mechanisms used to evaluate changes in performance was not asked in the pilot survey, but of the 210 colleges which responded to it, 47 colleges (22%) had no credible mechanism to evaluate changes to performance. Responses from colleges in this category included nil responses, the laconic 'if only ...', references forward to planned developments and backwards to response forms.

In such colleges, the response forms have been developed to their absolute limit. In a number of colleges, staff are asked to indicate action plans and/or plans to disseminate information in a section of the form. Alternatively, some colleges have procedures to follow up outcomes after 6, 9, 12 or 26 weeks. These approaches are illustrated on the next page:

Line managers meet with individuals undertaking staff development to identify outcomes. Contributions to change to performance are recorded on evaluation sheets.

Figure 17 Evaluation of staff development by all colleges

	What is being evaluated?			
Who does the evaluation?	Reactions	Increased skill	Improved performance	Business outcomes
Participants	97	85	69	49
Teams	43	43	44	38
Line managers	50	55	69	63
Senior managers	41	37	49	63

It is a section on the evaluation sheet, but is often not followed through.

An action plan is formulated subsequent to staff development which is reviewed three months after to establish if targets set have been achieved.

For all individual INSET, [there is] a six-month follow-up form with questions about how performance has been modified as a result of staff development.

Although these approaches may be useful for control purposes they are invalid in that there is little or no objective test of whether performance has in fact changed. The ultimate judge and jury on this question is the member of staff concerned.

The mechanism most frequently used to assess change to performance is appraisal, with a focus on development or performance management or both. Appraisal in many colleges is already associated with the observation of teaching and learning. This seems more promising. The evaluation mechanism is shared between appraiser and appraisee and appraisal is well embedded in most colleges.

As a mechanism to assess changes to performance, however, appraisal is open to four major objections:

- the individual focus of appraisal can be at odds with the reality of day-to-day work in colleges which usually takes place in teams
- it is time-consuming and difficult to move from the particular (evaluation on an individual basis) to the general (evaluation of changes to team or departmental performance)
- unless sufficient time and resources are devoted to appraisal, it will tend to be infrequent (some colleges are still operating on a two-year cycle) or invalid (it is not supported by observation or direct knowledge of the individual's performance)
- purely developmental models of appraisal do not focus on changes to performance at all.

The next most frequently identified mechanism for assessing change to performance included team or departmental reviews, usually taking place as part of annual planning or review cycles (67 mentions) and team or departmental quality assurance or self-assessment processes (64 mentions).

Quite frequently, the two mechanisms were in use in the same college as is revealed in the following three examples.

Each head of faculty or departmental manager is asked for an annual report evaluating the effectiveness of the staff development in their area and the relationship to the strategic plan. I then produce an annual report on staff development.

Cost–benefit analysis at local level by line managers feeding the annual report. Budget monitoring of strategic themes. Evaluation of expected outcomes/targets of training in application by participants, in liaison with their line manager. Performance management system of the college against schedules. Annual staff development report to quality benchmarks/targets.

Evaluations of courses/events attended by participants are discussed with the line manager before forms returned to personnel. Teams are expected to discuss staff development as an agenda item of their meetings. Line managers discuss staff development outcomes as part of the review process. Senior managers report back on outcomes for annual review and evaluation of their courses. Staff support director reports back on outcomes via cross-college review.

These sorts of approaches seem to be effective. They are:

- objective in that they are moderated by teams or line managers
- focused on performance and performance change
- administratively straightforward
- reflect the reality of team and departmental work
- practicable in that they are compatible with existing review and self-assessment processes
- reasonably frequent.

For a discussion of models along these lines, see Herbert (1998) and King (1997).

Bearing in mind that a number of colleges are operating both types of team/departmental approach, side by side, the proportion of colleges which effectively evaluate changes to performance is around half.

The third approach to evaluating change to performance focused on input measures (e.g. the number of days of staff development). I have discounted this since it does not evaluate outcomes.

Finally, some colleges refer to various outcomes (qualifications achieved, performance indicators for retention or achievement, new courses added to the college portfolio, etc.). I have discounted these as well. While they may constitute appropriate objectives, they are at best proxies for change to performance.

Achieving business outcomes

The situation with regard to evaluating the outcomes of staff development is no better. When staff developers were asked what mechanisms they used to identify the contribution of staff development to business outcomes, the number of nil responses was greater than for changes in performance. Typical responses included '... er ...', 'we don't really do this', 'what are business outcomes? Are they student qualifications?' and '... would like help in how to do this'.

Even where mechanisms are identified, they can be quite tenuous. The seven main approaches identified are:

- controlling inputs
- appraisal
- involvement of senior managers
- reporting mechanisms
- assertion
- measuring outputs
- team and managerial approaches.

Controlling inputs essentially involves the alignment of staff development activity to strategic and operational objectives. In this approach, staff development requests are approved or denied according to whether the proposed activity can be linked to objectives and in-house events are planned with reference to such objectives. While this is useful in controlling activity, it does not evaluate outcomes.

A number of colleges used the same mechanism to evaluate business outcomes that they used to evaluate changes to performance. In practice, this tends to mean appraisal and is open to the same objections as before ... only more so!

The involvement of senior managers and/or staff development reporting mechanisms (variously to the senior management team, principalship or corporation), indicates the interest of strategic managers in staff development. But in the absence of some robust evaluation infrastructure, evaluation will ultimately be based on response sheets, input measures or a combination of the two.

A fifth approach can only be described as 'assertion'. Several colleges identified performance indicators or 'meeting mission statement objectives', as evaluation measures. Unfortunately, this is open to the same objection as before. Without an evaluation infrastructure, the link between staff development and outcomes can only be asserted not demonstrated.

Measuring outputs provides the first valid measure (of those under review) of the relationship between staff development and the achievement of objectives. It is subject to three qualifications:

- Care will be required to avoid 'displacement', i.e. a focusing on easily measured outcomes rather than those directly related to objectives.
- Staff development outcomes will need to be relevant, i.e. appropriately related to business objectives. For example, the achievement of management qualifications in itself says little about the attainment of college objectives (more students recruited, greater student achievement, more effective deployment of resources, etc.).
- The contribution made by staff development will often need to be evaluated by the managers who are responsible for the achievement of these key objectives.

To develop this discussion further, the processes which can provide meaningful information concerning the contribution of staff development to the achievement of college objectives will almost certainly include:

- clear links between staff development activities and college objectives
- the involvement of managers in the evaluation of staff development in relation to the achievement of objectives for which they are responsible
- the identification of measurable objectives for the key elements of the staff development programme driven by staff developers
- a review by staff developers of the achievement of their own objectives.

Applying these four criteria generously, just under half (49%) of the colleges have reasonably robust ways of evaluating the contribution of staff development to the achievement of business objectives.

Actual mechanisms vary considerably and extend from relatively simple to quite complex processes. Examples are given below.

1. *Team reviews*
2. *Self-assessment for FEFC purposes*
3. *Review of staff development service with functional and curriculum managers*

Linked to strategic planning review and self-assessment.

Teams within faculties and units identify contribution to team/faculty unit objectives.

Report on staff development submitted to academic board and senior management team who identify contribution to business objectives.

Annual review of staff development based on spreadsheet.

Type of activity; how are needs identified; how activity has helped achieve corporate objective; evidence.

All areas of college submit their evaluations based on this spreadsheet.

1. *Individual staff development reviews*
2. *FEFC inspection needs*
3. *Faculty/department plan*
4. *Strategic plan*
5. *Investors in People*
6. *Consultation with management and staff*
7. *Evaluation and feedback from 1996/97 staff development activities*

Strategic plan review; costed/prioritised schedules monitored monthly; performance management system; staff development annual report; staff development as a fixed agenda item on all team/section meetings; adherence to IiP standards and to sustain the college's status as such; quality standards committee of academic board; policy report (annually) to board of corporation; cost-benefit analysis deployed.

Planning and evaluating staff development: inferences

- Processes to evaluate staff development have not kept pace with the evolution of staff development planning processes.
- The predominant mode of evaluation is still through response sheets, which suggests that practice has not changed very much over the last four years (see Martinez, 1995).
- Where evaluation has been put on a robust footing, it invariably involves team or departmental reviews either as part of a strategic/operational planning cycle or as part of quality assurance/self-assessment mechanisms, or indeed both.
- Effective evaluation procedures vary widely between colleges but have often been stimulated by Investors in People processes.
- Effective evaluation procedures invariably involve managers and teams across the college working within a system which has usually been designed by the staff developer.

Responsibilities for staff development

A glib answer to the question 'who is responsible for staff development?' would be 'the individual members of staff in conjunction with their line manager'. At the other extreme, the assumption is sometimes made that anything to do with staff development must be the staff developer's responsibility!

The reality is somewhat more complicated.

Staff developers were asked who took the lead responsibility for the development of:

- managers
- teachers
- support staff.

Taking just English, Welsh and Scottish FE colleges, the most frequent model was for the staff developer to assume lead responsibility for all three groups. Around 57% of FE colleges fall into this category.

The second largest degree of responsibility was assumed by line managers. For college managers, this tended to be undertaken by a member of the principalship, or collectively by senior managers (29%). For teachers, the lead role was undertaken by curriculum managers (25%), sometimes by the senior academic manager, but more usually by heads of department, faculty or school. For support staff, the lead role was undertaken by functional heads (32%), with the role shared fairly equally between the head of personnel (or finance, or resources) and by the head of unit or service.

Variations from these two broad approaches occurred where responsibility for all staff was assumed by the head of personnel (where they were not the same as the staff developer), usually associated with the personnel unit model discussed above, or where responsibility was shared between a staff developer and another (usually the relevant line manager).

These patterns were repeated with some small variations across the other types of college.

Devolution of staff development budgets

The picture of the key central role of the staff developer, and also the significant incidence of shared responsibility, is reflected in the extent to which staff development budgets have been devolved.

In just under half the colleges (48%), all the staff development budget is held by the staff developer. A further 10% of all colleges devolve between 1% and 10% of the staff development budget. Scottish and

land-based industry colleges retain more centrally than other types of college. Thus, in 71% of Scottish colleges and 87% of land-based industry colleges, 10% or less of the staff development budget is devolved.

At other end of the spectrum, 17% of all colleges devolve 51% or more of the staff development budget. The bulk of colleges in this category are further education and sixth-form colleges. The data is set out in Figure 18 below.

Comparison with the earlier survey of FE and tertiary colleges (Martinez, 1994), suggests that there has been a pronounced shift towards devolved budgets. Of the 124 staff developers who took part in the earlier survey, 81% had full control of their staff development budget. In the present survey, less than half (48%) of staff developers have devolved none of their budget. The two surveys asked slightly different questions ('control' in the earlier survey, 'devolution' in the present one), but the comparison is nevertheless persuasive.

There appears to be an inconsistency here between the sharing of lead responsibility for staff development and the devolution of budgets. In some 40% of colleges the lead responsibility for staff development for different groups of staff is undertaken by someone other than the staff developer. In over 80% of colleges, less than 50% of the staff development budget is devolved.

The control of budgets is hotly contested, and the arguments in favour of centralisation can be summarised as follows:

- control to ensure that scarce resources are applied appropriately and that there are clear lines of accountability
- coordination to avoid reinventing the wheel
- a central focus for cross-college development
- value for money and quality achieved through the experience and competence of the staff developer.

There are, however, some equally cogent arguments for devolution, notably:

- more direct involvement of managers across the college in staff development
- greater effectiveness through an enhanced focus on key outcomes
- less bureaucracy and greater responsiveness
- better, because shorter, lines of control and accountability.

The arguments will no doubt continue but several inferences may be drawn here:

- In over half of all colleges, staff developers retain lead responsibility for development of all types of staff and a correspondingly large proportion of the staff development budget.
- In a substantial minority of colleges, the lead role for different groups of staff is undertaken by someone other than the staff developer, usually line managers.
- There is an apparent mismatch between the extent to which responsibilities and budgets have been shared.
- There is some scope for further devolution of staff development budgets.
- Devolution is unlikely to be effective unless it goes along with clarified accountabilities, the development of arrangements to identify and address cross-college needs and an appropriate level of coordination
- Greater effectiveness or improved value for money, is unlikely to be achieved through devolving budgets moreover, unless planning and evaluation competencies of the wider group of budget holders are developed.

Figure 18 Devolution of college budgets

	Percentage of budget													
	0%		1–10%		11–25%		26–50%		51–75%		76–100%		Total	
Type of college	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
FE	63	48	10	8	6	5	25	19	18	14	8	6	130	100
Scottish	7	50	3	21	—	—	2	14	2	14	—	—	14	100
Welsh	1	14	2	29	—	—	2	29	1	14	1	14	7	100
Sixth-form colleges	24	48	4	8	2	4	12	24	5	10	3	6	50	100
Land-based industry	10	67	3	20	—	—	1	7	1	7	—	—	15	100
Art and design	2	40	1	20	1	20	1	20	—	—	—	—	5	100
Total	**107**	**48**	**23**	**10**	**9**	**4**	**43**	**19**	**27**	**12**	**12**	**5**	**221**	**100**

5 Staff development operations

In-house staff development programmes

The great majority of colleges (206 or 92%) run in-house staff development programmes. Amalgamating the three categories of (larger) FE college (English, Scottish and Welsh), these are the most likely to offer such programmes (95%). The smaller sixth-form colleges are less likely to offer such programmes (83%); all the 15 land-based industry colleges run in-house programmes.

The position is rather different for accreditation. Broadly speaking, colleges operate one of two approaches to accrediting staff development. The first approach can be described as 'piecemeal'. It involves accrediting specific training and development programmes and using a variety of awarding bodies as appropriate. The second could be described as holistic and involves the creation of an overarching framework for assessment and accreditation.

The holistic approach offers the possibility of:

- accrediting learning that would not otherwise be accredited
- extending the accreditation opportunities available through the piecemeal approach
- accrediting prior experience and learning
- providing opportunities for accelerated progression towards, for example, graduate or postgraduate qualifications.

Exponents of the holistic approach identify a number of benefits including:

- the provision of coherent and flexible learning pathways
- the creation of professional development pathways which increasingly mirror the learning experiences of students
- the opportunity to gain qualifications for staff who may have no or few qualifications (particularly support staff)
- the opportunity to gain valued qualifications (particularly where the validation partner is a higher education institution)
- greater focus on the planning of learning informed by the greater rigour of assessment
- enhanced opportunities to evaluate staff development on a more robust basis.

There are, however, some drawbacks, notably the investment of time required to create such frameworks, their costs and the discouragement which may arise from poorly designed or inappropriate assessment processes.

Examples of the holistic approach (drawn from outside this survey) include the accreditation of professional development recorded in a portfolio (Bilston, 1996), a framework for assessing work-based learning at Harlow College (Martinez *et al.*, 1998) and the tutoring/learning model developed at Solihull College (Donoghue, 1998). Anecdotal evidence suggests that the piecemeal approach is far more widespread than the holistic.

Taking the two approaches together, just under three-quarters of colleges (74%) offer accreditation for staff development, with further education, Scottish and land-based industry colleges above the norm (77%, 83% and 93% respectively) and sixth-form colleges below the norm (60%).

Access to mainstream college courses

Much has been made in recent years of employee development schemes offered by private and public corporations. These encourage employees to participate in formal learning opportunities (Corney, 1995). Colleges are well in advance of the norms for other industrial and service sectors.

Almost all colleges waive course fees for staff who want to pursue courses offered as part of the mainstream curriculum. Overall, 91% of colleges waive fees for full-time staff. The percentage falls slightly to 87% if part-time staff are included.

FE, Scottish and land-based industry colleges are slightly less generous in waiving fees for all staff (86%, 85% and 85% respectively). Sixth-form colleges are more generous (93%).

This slight degree of discrimination against part-time staff is anomalous and seems to arise for one of two main reasons:

- cost
- anxiety over the possibility of creating contracts of service where the intention is to operate 'contracts for service'.

Both seem misconceived. Except in the most unusual circumstances, the cost of 'infilling' will be more than offset by income generated through additional funding. The contracts issue is more complicated and specialist advice may be required. In general terms, however, it seems unlikely that the contractual relationship between colleges and contract teachers will be disturbed as long as colleges are consistent in their offer of a (voluntary) concession to all categories of contract staff (i.e. including caterers, cleaners, etc.). If this is done, the issue reverts back to a straightforward calculation of cost: income foregone in the form of fees versus additional funding income through increased take-up of courses.

In-house staff development: inferences

- The strategic importance attached to staff development can be gauged by the frequency with which colleges offer in-house programmes of staff development; the overwhelming majority do so (92%).
- Most colleges offer accreditation opportunities (74%) although the prevailing model appears to be a piecemeal approach.
- There appears to be considerable scope to extend accreditation opportunities within an overarching or holistic framework, particularly those negotiated with sympathetic higher education partners.
- Nine out of ten colleges waive their fees for full-time staff who want to join a mainstream programme.
- There is no obvious reason why the remaining 10% of colleges should not do the same.
- Subject to the availability of infill places, colleges should extend the principle of the remission of fees to their part-time staff.

IN-HOUSE TEACHER TRAINING

Four out of five colleges (80%) offer in-house opportunities for teachers to gain recognised teaching qualifications. The proportion is significantly higher in the larger further education, Scottish and Welsh colleges (98%, 93% and 100% respectively). It is lower in land-based industry colleges (73%) and much lower in sixth-form colleges (40%) and colleges of art and design (20%).

Of the teaching qualifications which are offered in-house, TDLB awards are more or less universal across all types of college (97%). The City and Guilds 730 series is offered by most English and Welsh further education colleges and relatively infrequently by the smaller colleges. Scottish colleges favoured the equivalent Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) national and higher national qualifications (54%). BEds (CertEds) and PGCEs are offered primarily by English, Scottish and Welsh FE colleges (72%, 46% and 71% respectively) and are offered relatively infrequently by the smaller colleges.

Postgraduate qualifications are offered by a substantial minority of FE, Scottish and sixth-form colleges (18%, 23% and 23% respectively). (See Figure 19.)

A few colleges offer other qualifications, mainly for specialist teaching skills in IT, basic education, informal learning, severe learning difficulties and disabilities (SLDD), coaching, etc.

Figure 19 Teaching qualifications offered in house

	Type of qualification											
	TDLB		CGLI 730		BEd/CertEd/ PGCE		Postgraduate qualifications		SQA nat./ higher nat.		Other	
Type of college	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
FE	126	97	115	88	94	72	24	18	13	10	17	13
Scottish	13	100	1	8	6	46	3	23	7	54	—	—
Welsh	7	100	6	86	5	71	1	14	1	14	2	29
Sixth-form college	21	95	4	18	4	18	5	23	1	14	1	5
Land-based industry	12	100	5	42	3	25	1	8	—	—	2	17
Art and design	1	100	1	100	1	100	1	100	1	8	1	100
Total	**180**	**97**	**132**	**71**	**113**	**61**	**35**	**19**	**22**	**12**	**23**	**12**

In-house teaching qualifications: inferences

This brief discussion raises a number of issues connected with the current discussion around introducing a general requirement for FE teachers to have a teaching qualification.

- If a qualification requirement were to be introduced at around the level of the City and Guilds 730 Certificate, over two-thirds (68%) of all colleges would be in a position to offer in-house development and accreditation.
- If, on the other hand, the minimum requirement were to be set at CertEd/BEd/PGCE level, the proportion of colleges currently able to offer in-house training would drop to 49%.
- In either case, colleges that do not currently offer in-house teacher training would be placed at a substantial disadvantage.
- Some sort of interim arrangements would be required to avoid disadvantaging such colleges.

Operational issues

Wherever two or more staff developers gather together, some of the discussion will inevitably turn to detailed operational questions:

- Have you got your own office?
- What mileage rates do you pay?
- How do you promote your events?

The following discussion, therefore, concentrates on these nuts and bolts issues.

Office accommodation

Staff developers were asked whether they had their own office with access to a telephone, PC, etc. Almost all staff developers responded 'yes'. The main groups of staff developers who share office accommodation or who do not have access to a PC or telephone occurred in FE colleges (9%) and Scottish colleges (29%).

Mileage rates for staff development

Mileage rates were far more diverse. They ranged from nil (only five colleges) to 56 pence per mile (only one college) and with a wide spread of mileage rates in between. The median figure is 29 pence per mile; the average is 30 pence per mile and interquartile range (the middle 50% of all colleges) is from 25 to 35 pence per mile.

Given the current decline of staff development budgets, there is a strong argument for reducing mileage rates which are above 30 pence per mile.

Promoting staff development events

Staff developers have ten principal means to promote their events and other development opportunities. They are, in descending order of importance:

- personal contact
- general distribution of publicity
- selective distribution of publicity
- appraisal/individual supervision
- meetings/team briefings
- circulation of a programme of activities
- noticeboards
- newsletters
- e-mail
- intranet/Internet.

Most of the colleges (around 80%) use all of the first eight media in some combination. Less than half of all colleges use e-mail and intranet or Internet.

Staff developers were asked to evaluate the relative usefulness of the different communication media on a scale which ran from 1 (not at all useful) to 5 (very useful). Their evaluations are set out below with the mean score in brackets:

- selective distribution of publicity (3.98)
- personal contact (3.82)
- appraisal/individual supervision (3.80)
- circulation of a programme of activities (3.68)
- newsletter (3.63)
- meetings/team briefings (3.57)
- general distribution of publicity (3.33)
- e-mail (3.15)
- notice board (2.68)
- intranet or Internet (2.33).

This suggests that the optimum mix of promotional activity will include:

- selective (or targeted) distribution of publicity
- personal contact and team briefings
- circulation of a programme of activities
- newsletters.

6 Conclusions: staff development in transition

Staff development has come a long way since incorporation. The title of the first of the annual conferences I ran for staff developers in 1993 was 'Staff development at the crossroads'. Earmarked funding from the then Department of Education and Science (now the DfEE) had just ceased. The patchy support for staff development made by local education authorities had all but disappeared and colleges were newly established as independent corporations. There was at least as much anxiety about funding and internal college priorities as there was celebration for new-found freedoms. This survey demonstrates the substantial progress made over the intervening five years.

It also shows that staff development is in transition.

At incorporation, staff development was strongly oriented towards teachers (at the expense of support staff). It was often unplanned, unsystematic, unaccountable and unevaluated. In many colleges it was fundamentally driven by the enthusiasms of individual members of staff. Its focus was, in fact, often operational. It tended to be oriented towards maintenance rather than a developmental role (see, for example, King, 1997).

This survey shows some clear lines of development in terms of:

- the priority and resources allocated by colleges to staff development
- strategy
- systems
- structures
- staff developers themselves.

It also suggests some continuing tensions and unresolved issues.

College priorities

In terms of college priorities, staff development is closely associated with one or more key college functions: curriculum, quality or personnel. Staff development budgets seem to be converging on a norm of around 1.0% of overall college expenditure. Staff development is more closely integrated with college strategic and operational planning processes. Most colleges allocate four or five days each year to in-house staff development activity as well as supporting attendance at external courses, conferences and other events. This prioritisation across the sector is uneven, however, particularly in relation to staff contracts and budgets.

As far as staff contracts are concerned, six out of ten colleges include an obligation to take part in staff development in their contracts of employment, but less than four out of ten colleges specify when and how this might happen.

Staff development budgets are becoming more standardised in terms of what they include and represent a rather larger proportion of college budgets than has sometimes been supposed. In many colleges, however, they are still vulnerable as the recent decline in budget allocations makes clear.

Further, there must be some doubt whether the sector norm for staff development expenditure is high enough. This conclusion arises from the requirement for staff development to be effective at both strategic and operational levels. It is reinforced by a consideration of the strong internal and external pressures to effect improvements in retention and achievement which will involve substantial staff development effort. In many colleges, the heavy teaching commitments of staff developers and the isolation of their role within the college structure undermines or constrains the effective delivery of the staff development role.

Staff development strategy

Staff development has become much more closely integrated with college strategy, primarily through:

- the involvement of staff developers in strategic and operational planning processes
- the involvement of line managers in planning staff development
- the development of more formal and systematic planning procedures.

This is reflected in staff development priorities for both teaching and support staff which reflect current college strategic priorities very closely. These priorities can be characterised in terms of a quality improvement and change agenda rather than the maintenance agenda revealed by earlier surveys.

Further components of staff development strategy include equal opportunities (the equal access of business support staff to staff development opportunities) and devolution (the sharing of planning and budgetary responsibilities with line managers).

Again, development between colleges is uneven and incomplete. Although substantial progress can be

identified, access is not yet quite equal for business support staff, or indeed part-time staff.

There is still a mismatch in many colleges, moreover, between shared or devolved decision-making and budget arrangements for staff development.

Staff development systems

There have been some dramatic improvements in systems to identify staff development needs; plans to meet those needs; devising and designing staff development opportunities; promoting staff development; and delivery. Most colleges run in-house staff development programmes and offer free access to mainstream college courses to their staff. Over two-thirds of colleges offer nationally accredited initial teacher training qualifications at the level of the City and Guild 730 series and equivalent SQA qualifications.

The major weakness in staff development systems continues to be in the mechanism to evaluate the contribution of staff development in improving performance or achieving college business objectives. Around 50% of colleges lack credible evaluation systems to do this.

Staff development structures

In terms of the 'hard' elements of analysis (strategy, systems, structures), staff development structures seem to be the least fully developed. Notwithstanding the increasing complexity, scope and significance of the role, the predominant staff development structure is still that of the lone staff developer sometimes supported by a committee and sometimes with administrative support.

The position of the lone practitioner is contrasted with the team approach in a minority of colleges which usually takes place within curriculum development or personnel units.

The continuing structural isolation of many staff developers is surprising given the agreed priorities for their role and the frequency with which teacher (and other) trainers are operating quite separately elsewhere in the college.

Staff developers

Staff developers, too, seem to be in transition. The huge range of job titles will no doubt continue to reflect local priorities, job roles and the idiosyncrasies of history and culture. It is difficult to see how staff developers can be fully effective across the sector when half have been in post for less than two years and just under a quarter have been in post for less than a year.

Similarly, the trends for certification in college management and teaching will find an increased echo in staff development. There are likely to be strong internal and external pressures to increase the 30% of staff developers who have (or are working towards) a relevant qualification. The logical and expected consequences of the changes identified above will be that more time will be dedicated to the staff development function. This will imply a reduction of the teaching commitments of many staff developers.

The interplay between the requirement for increased professionalism and professional skill, the need to extend the coordinating and managerial role of staff developers and the increasingly developmental and strategic focus for the role is likely to result, finally, in salaries being more closely associated with managerial rather than teaching functions.

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FE matters

Like the rest of further education, the staff development function has been undergoing great upheaval. Positioned between management and teaching, the experiences, status and even job titles of staff are diverse. Many more staff developers need to achieve a relevant staff development qualification, yet half have been in post for less than two years and just under a quarter for less than one.

This report draws on responses from over 200 colleges to make sense of the staff development position by identifying patterns of organisation and activity. It assesses how far staff development has come in the five years since incorporation and provides benchmarks for the future across the sector and by type of college.

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